

Orth Building
140 South Oregon Street
Jacksonville
Jackson County
Oregon

HABS No. ORE-111

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PHOTOGRAPH

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. ORE-111

ORTH BUILDING

Location: 140 South Oregon Street, Jacksonville, Jackson County, Oregon.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The Orth Building occupies a site which was occupied earlier by the Eagle Brewery, the City Brewery, and a number of smaller buildings.¹ An 1857 deed for an adjacent parcel refers to the boundary between that lot and "Holman's House."² On the Kuchel and Dressel lithograph of Jacksonville published in 1856, a J. J. Holman is identified as the owner of the Eagle Brewery.³ As early as 1859, however, Holman's Eagle Brewery was located on the east side of Oregon Street, south of Pine Street,⁴ for in that year it was purchased by Joseph Wetterer,⁵ who had sold his City Brewery to Viet Schutz.⁶ It is quite possible, therefore, that the building on the west side of Oregon Street was not a brewery, but a saloon or store. In later years, the building on the west side of the street became part of the City Brewery--although Schutz apparently rented it to a number of businesses, including a Chinese laundry.⁷ In 1872, when John Orth razed the building to erect a new brick structure, the Democratic Times lamented:

An Old Landmark Going

Mr. John Orth has commenced to tear down the old City Brewery, in order to make room for his immense new brick house. This old house is one of the landmarks of the town. It was built in 1852, and has in times been devoted to almost every purpose except that of printing a newspaper or serving God.⁸

As a footnote, the Times added that both the Eagle and City Breweries would remain in business.

Even though the land had for many years been occupied by a substantial, two-story brewery or saloon, James Cluggage retained ownership of the parcel, since it lay within his donation land claim.⁹ In 1872, he gave John Orth a warranty deed for a lot with a thirty-three-foot frontage on Oregon Street, between Thomas Chavner's lot at California and Oregon Streets and Brunner's lot at Main and Oregon Streets.¹⁰ The so-called Brunner lot was actually the north part of Brunner's original lot, which he had sold in December 1860 to John M. Drake--along with the right to use the north wall of his store in the construction of a new brick building, the right of access through the yard at the rear of the Brunner Building, and the use of his well and pump.¹¹ Six months later, Drake sold the lot

to Matthew Ish, a butcher.¹² In 1864, John Long acquired the property as part of a settlement of a court case;¹³ he in turn leased the butcher shop on the property to John Orth.¹⁴ In 1865, Orth purchased the shop, tools, and fixtures--and with them the right to use the north wall of the Brunner store in building a new shop.¹⁵ In 1872, after acquiring the Cluggage parcel and the brewery building on the north side of his butcher shop, Orth also acquired a half interest in the south wall of Thomas Chavner's brick store--including a right of way through the cellar for a drainage ditch six inches wide and six inches deep.¹⁶ Thus, Orth had acquired not only the land on which to construct a large new building but also interests in existing brick walls which would reduce the cost of construction.

The Democratic Times reported in early 1872 that Orth was planning to build a new two-story brick building. The structure was to have a basement, two stores and a meat market on the ground floor, and a hall on the second floor.¹⁷ In July the paper reported that he had cleared the land,¹⁸ and that the cornerstone had been laid.¹⁹ By November, construction had almost been completed, and E. Jacobs planned to move his store into the new building.²⁰ Over the years, a number of businesses have occupied parts of the building: A. C. Jones and H. K. Hanna, attorneys, had offices on the second floor; and C. G. B. Rostel, a barber, occupied part of the first floor.²¹ In 1880, the second floor was remodeled and used as the wigwam or lodge rooms of the Oregon Pocahontas Tribe No. 1, International Order of Red Men.²²

The building is currently used for commercial purposes.

FOOTNOTES

1
C. E. Curley and J. S. Howard, "Map of Jacksonville," 1864.

2
Jackson County Deeds, December 7, 1857.

3
Kuchel and Dressel, "Jacksonville, Jackson County, Oregon Territory," 1856. This view of the town was distributed locally by W. W. Fowler and C. C. Beekman.

4
Jackson County Deeds, July 18, 1859.

5
Ibid., August 25, 1859.

6
Ibid., July 20, 1858.

7
Curley and Howard, "Map," 1864.

8
The Democratic Times, June 22, 1872.

9
For an explanation of donation land claims, see Ross and Owens,
"Historical Area Study of Jacksonville Oregon" (HABS No. ORE-127).

10
Jackson County Deeds, February 2, 1872.

11
Ibid., December 10, 1860.

12
Ibid., July 12, 1861.

13
Ibid., February 19, 1864. Long's judgment against Drake was for
\$1,302.33.

14
Ibid., September 18, 1863. The lease was recorded among the deed
records of the County; while the recording of leases was not a standard
practice, this is not a unique case either.

15
Ibid., March 20, 1865.

16
Ibid., August 15, 1872.

17
The Democratic Times, February 3, 1872.

18
Ibid., July 6, 1872.

19
Ibid., July 20, 1872.

20
Ibid., November 9, 1872.

21
Ibid., July 26, 1878.

22
Ibid., January 23, 1880.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. Description of Exterior:

1. Number of stories: The building has two stories, but is built into a hill so that the southwest corner is only one story above the ground.
2. Number of bays: The front (east) elevation is nine bays wide with the ground floor treated as an arcade. The back facade is six bays, with a door in the second bay from either end. On the second floor, the side elevations are six bays.
3. Layout, shape: The building is a regular rectangular block.
4. Wall construction, finish, color: The walls are brick and unpainted. The foundation is stone; on the rear facade the ground floor is also stone.
5. Chimneys: Chimneys designed for heating stove flues are spaced around the perimeter of the roof on the side and rear elevations.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways: The main facade has an arcade of square piers; all nine openings on the ground floor are doorways. The piers and semicircular arches are rusticated. The doors are double, with glazed lights; above the square-headed doors are fanlights with wooden muntins. The doors on the rear facade have segmentally-arched heads. There is one door on the rear facade opening into the ground floor; it has a segmental brick relieving arch filled in with brick to the door lintel.
 - b. Windows: The second-floor windows are set in bays divided by pilaster strips. The windows have stone sills and lintels. Above each window is a rectangular recessed panel. The windows on the rear facade have segmental relieving arches and stone sills. On the side elevations, the segmental arches are topped by small cornices.
7. Roof:
 - a. Shape: The roof is flat and hidden behind a parapet.

- b. Cornice: The top of the wall now ends in a plain parapet. A flat parapet runs along the side walls.

B. Description of Interior:

The building is used for the storage of roots and bulbs; the interior could not be examined.

C. Site and Surroundings:

The east facade faces South Oregon Street. The building is attached to one-story, brick buildings on both the south and north sides. Since it was the last building constructed on the block, the existing side walls of the adjacent buildings serve as walls for this building; for this reason the second-floor walls of the building overlap the walls of the adjacent buildings.

D. Original Appearance:

Originally a canopy extended across the sidewalk in front of the building; it had a balcony with a low balustrade. A deep and salient cornice was supported by brackets springing from the pilaster strips that divide the second story into bays; these brackets served both as ornamentation for the cornice and as capitals for the pilasters.

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